

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SUMMER WORK AND TRAVEL 2014

Each applicant must meet very strict requirements to receive a SWT visa. The applicant must speak English at the interview and demonstrate to the consular officer that he or she will return to Uzbekistan upon completion of the program.

Do not rely solely on the advice of your friends, facilitators, or internet cafes when you prepare for your participation in SWT!

Who is eligible to apply in the Summer/Work and Travel Program (SWT)?

University students who can demonstrate sufficient proficiency in English may apply for this program which allows them to work and learn about American culture during their summer holidays. This program is open to students who are pursuing degrees at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels.

Can I apply to this program if I graduate this year?

Final year students who will graduate this year are eligible to take part in this program during the school's major academic break immediately following their graduation, as long as they apply to participate in the SWT program prior to graduation.

I am a student at vocational college, am I eligible to apply to this program?

Part-time students, distance-learning students, and students from vocational colleges are not eligible to participate.

I already have all my documents in order. When is the earliest I can apply for a visa interview?

Applicants to SWT should request appointments starting on Friday, 02 May 2014 and every available day afterwards until Friday, June 13, 2014.

I'm not an Uzbek citizen, but I live and study in Uzbekistan. Can I apply to participate in SWT?

Yes, if you reside (live and study) in Uzbekistan then you may apply for SWT. If you do not live and study in Uzbekistan, then you should apply for SWT in your country of residence and/or study.

What is the age limit to participate in the program?

U.S. law does not impose an age limit for participation in this program.

Am I allowed to extend my stay in the U.S. via the SWT program?

Program extensions are not permitted. Students must return to Uzbekistan prior to the start date of their university or institute.

How long before the program start date may I enter the United States?

You may not begin working until the SWT program start date (indicated on your DS-2019).

Please remember that participation in the SWT program cannot prevent you from attending any scheduled classes or taking exams at your university.

How long does the SWT program last?

SWT participants from Uzbekistan will have a window of opportunity – 1 June 2014 to 1 October 2014 – during which applicants can participate. Please note however, that each individual participant's program dates must not start before, or go after, their university's academic break and these dates should appear on the DS-2019 forms. Please refer to the table above for the timing requirements.

You cannot miss any classes in order to participate in SWT. Here are the details:

**Timing Requirements for
Summer Work and Travel 2014**

| If you attend: | You may start the SWT Program on or after: | You must depart the U.S. and return to Uzbekistan on or before: |
|---|---|--|
| Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT) | 1 June 2014 | 1 October 2014 |
| Management Development Institute of Singapore (MDIS) in Tashkent | 1 June 2014 | 20 September 2014 |
| Any public university in Uzbekistan | 15 June 2014 | 1 September 2014 |

Can I apply for a J-1 visa to participate in SWT if I have previously participated in the Diversity Visa lottery (Green card lottery)?

The consular officer evaluates each applicant individually on the basis of his or her ties to Uzbekistan. Although participation in the DV lottery does not disqualify one for a J visa or any other visa, it does indicate a desire to immigrate to the United States, which is a factor in evaluating one's ties to Uzbekistan. In order to qualify for most categories of a U.S. temporary visa, the applicant must demonstrate strong ties to their residence in Uzbekistan.

I was recently refused a B1/B2 visitor visa to see my relatives in the United States. Can I apply for a J-1 visa to participate in SWT if I have been refused for a visitor visa?

The consular officer evaluates each applicant individually on the basis of his or her ties to Uzbekistan. In order to qualify for most categories of a U.S. temporary visa, the applicant must demonstrate strong ties to their residence in Uzbekistan.

I really want to participate in the SWT program, but I do not know how to find a sponsor, please, help me!

You can find a list of approved sponsors where you can apply for a job in the following link:

<http://j1visa.state.gov/participants/how-to-apply/sponsor-search/?program=Summer%20Work%20Travel>

I do not understand the role of a sponsor.

Sponsors hold the primary responsibility for helping program participants find appropriate jobs and ensuring their safety while in the United States. These sponsors are approved by the U.S. Department of State as authorized organizations to support participants in the SWT program. They also assist applicants in arranging appropriate housing and transportation if employers are unable to do so. Your sponsor is your first point of contact if you have any problems while participating in the SWT program.

Who is an agent and how can I find one?

An agent is the official local representative of an approved sponsor. Agents often help sponsors to recruit program participants, help the sponsor match them with jobs, and assist the participants in the preparation process.

Please note: Consular Section at U.S. Embassy Tashkent is not affiliated with any agents in Uzbekistan and cannot recommend or endorse any agents which claim affiliation with the SWT program.

Can an agent guarantee I will get a visa?

No one can guarantee you will get a visa. It is your responsibility to understand the program requirements and make sure you are prepared to demonstrate your qualification at the interview.

How much does an agent cost?

Applicants are encouraged to discuss costs with agents before signing up and make sure they understand what services are included and what is not.

What is the sponsor's role in finding a job?

Sponsors hold the primary responsibility for helping program participants find appropriate jobs and ensuring their safety while in the United States. They also assist applicants in arranging appropriate housing and transportation if employers are unable to do so. Your sponsor is your first point of contact if you have any problems while participating in the SWT program.

I've participated in SWT last year. Do I need to use the services of a local agent?

If you have already participated in the SWT program, you might not have to use the services of a local agent. You should contact your previous U.S. sponsor directly to see if you require the services of the local agent given your familiarity of the SWT program.

Can I find my own job?

It is possible but you will still require the services of a sponsoring organization. The organization would have to contact your proposed place of employment and ensure that the job that you've identified is appropriate for SWT employment. A person cannot travel to the U.S. to participate in the SWT program if his/her position was not reviewed and approved by the U.S. sponsor.

What if my sponsor refuses to review/approve the job that I found myself?

All job positions must be vetted by the U.S. sponsoring organization.

Can I change my place of employment during my participation in an exchange visitor program?

Check with your sponsor before you leave for the United States. Whether you can change your place of employment during your exchange program depends on the contract or arrangements you made with your sponsor or the potential employer. Most pre-arranged employment conditions will not permit a change of employment. If you change employment without authorization of your sponsor, your exchange visitor program will be terminated. A participant whose program is terminated must leave the U.S. immediately. Failure to comply can create legal difficulties for the participant that will affect his or her further ability to travel, study or work in the United States at any time in the future.

What types of jobs are available?

There is a wide variety of jobs available for SWT, from serving in a fast food restaurant to working at an amusement park. However there are a number of types of jobs that are excluded from the program. Please check <http://j1visa.state.gov/programs/summer-work-travel> for the full list of jobs that are not permitted. To view the full list, scroll down to the section titled "More Information" and expand the part labeled "Exclusions."

How are SWT participants paid?

Summer Work/Travel participants receive the same pay and benefits as U.S. citizens in the same or similar positions. Information about the Federal Minimum Wage requirements should be provided by your sponsor prior to acceptance in the program.

Where will I live? Who will pay for my housing?

Talk to your employer about housing. Your employer must work with you to locate safe and affordable housing for the program. If your employer is unable to locate appropriate housing, please contact your sponsor for assistance.

How much will all of this cost me?

You will need to pay for the costs of a local agent to facilitate your SWT paperwork, including the DS-2019 – those costs vary. The required SEVIS payment fee is \$35, and the visa interview will cost \$160. If your visa is approved, you will be responsible for your round trip flight to the U.S. and you will be responsible for the costs of your housing and meals. You will also be responsible for medical insurance while you are in the United States, and those costs also vary.

What are the required documents to participate in the SWT program?

1. Electronic application form DS-160. This application must be filled out electronically at <http://ceac.state.gov/genniv>.
2. A passport valid for travel abroad.
3. A photograph taken within the past 6 months (photographs must be in color, 5cm X 5cm in size and on a white background).
4. Form DS-2019 for exchange visitor visas. This form is issued by the sponsoring organization.
5. Information about your job offer in the United States.
6. Form I-901 or I-797 proof of SEVIS payment (see below for details)
7. Documents to prove their status as students such as student IDs, transcripts and etc.

What is the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)?

SEVIS is an Internet-based system that provides tracking and monitoring and access to accurate and current information on nonimmigrant students and exchange visitors, including those participating in SWT.

SEVIS is required for all SWT participants. A fee of \$35.00 for the SWT 2014 season must be paid prior to your visa interview. Your SWT sponsor might pay this on your behalf and include the SEVIS fee into their services. See our [page on SEVIS payment](#) for more information on this payment.

Please keep your SEVIS I-901 fee payment receipt, in order to prove you have paid the fee.

Why do I have to read a pamphlet about my legal rights in the United States?

The William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008 (WWTVPRA) requires you to be made aware of your legal rights under Federal immigration, labor, and employment laws. At the time of the visa interview, you must confirm that you have received, read, and understood the information in the pamphlet. We recommend that you read and understand the William Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Act pamphlet, before the interview.

You can download a printable version [here](#) (PDF, 70Kb). Or [click here for an online version in Russian](#) (PDF, 242Kb).